

**Borough of Yeovil**



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**

**31st DECEMBER, 1957**



B O R O U G H   O F   Y E O V I L

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Mayor:

COUNCILLOR WILLIAM JOHN ENGLISH.

Deputy Mayor:

COUNCILLOR DOROTHY VIOLET VINCENT.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Alderman W. J. C. PITTARD (Chairman)

Councillor S. PINDER (Vice-Chairman)

The Mayor

Councillor MRS. R. V. GOWERS.      Councillor J. P. KELLY.

Councillor MRS. D. V. VINCENT.

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH


Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer:

P. POWER FOX, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Assistant County Medical Officer:

M. I. ROSS, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Dental Surgeon	...	...	...	QUENTIN DAVIES L.D.S., R.C.S. (England).
Senior Public Health Inspector	...		...	C. G. H. RICE, M.S.I.A., A. Inst.S.A., Cert. R.S.I., S.I.J.P., Cert.R.S.I. Meat and Food.
Public Health Inspectors	...	...	...	G.E. ROADHOUSE, M.S.I.A., A.R.San.1., Cert. R.S.I., S.I.J.B., Cert.R.S.I. Meat and Other Foods.
				J. F. WELSBY, M.S.I.A., A.R.San.1., Cert. R.S.I., S.I.J.B., Cert.R.S.I. Meat and Other Foods.
Student Public Health Inspector	...		...	A.A.D. CHARLES.



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TO THE  
MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS  
of the  
YEOVIL BOROUGH COUNCIL

---ooOoo---

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1957.

As in previous years the health of the community has been satisfactory. The number of infectious diseases notified was 347, this increase on the previous year (90) being mainly due to an outbreak of measles, 236 cases.

In general, the diseases notified were mild in character, and there were no deaths notified as due to an infectious disease. The number of cases of Anterior Poliomyelitis notified was 5, all were mild in character and there were no cases with a residual paralysis.

The Standardised Death Rate was 11.8 as compared with that of England and Wales of 11.5, and as in the previous year, the greater percentage of deaths occurred in people aged 70 years and over, i.e., 218 out of a total of 312.

The Standardised Birth Rate was 16.2 as compared with 14.6 for the previous year. The Birth Rate for England and Wales was 16.1 per thousand total population.

The Infantile Mortality Rate was 13.05 as compared with that of England and Wales of 23.0.

In my report for the year 1956, I showed the value of sufficient fluorine in the water in the prevention of caries of the teeth. Unfortunately, the Yeovil water supply is lacking in fluorine, the amount present being less than 0.1 parts per million. The minimum amount which should be present to prevent caries is 1 part per million, though in some parts of England, the amount of fluorine present is 7 or 8 parts per million. Fluoridation of water is the rectifying of a defect of the naturally occurring water supply by the addition of a fluoride so that the fluorine content is 1 to 2 parts per million.

Reports I have read in the various medical publications during the past year, have confirmed my belief in the value of such a measure and any future planning of water mains should take into consideration the probability that fluoridation will be an essential process in the future communal water supply. Yeovil is fortunate in that for the past two years the School Dental Service has been fully manned, there is no doubt that this is due to the far sighted policy of the Council in providing housing accommodation when desired for the Dental Officers.

#### MATERNITY SURVEY

Details are given later in my report of the results of the Survey carried out in 1957. It may be asked what the value of such a Survey is, but Surveys such as this show the trend of what is happening and are useful for comparison with possible future Surveys. I wish to acknowledge the help of the Health Visitors and District Nurses, who co-operated so well in completing the questionnaire.



During the past 10 years conditions conducive to "safe confinements" have increased considerably. The increasing range of antibiotics and sulpha drugs has greatly diminished the risk and mortality of puerperal sepsis, once the bugbear of midwifery. The improved nutrition and health of expectant mothers has virtually banished rickets, with its possible deformity of the pelvis, and ante-natal care is available to all expectant mothers.

The standard of housing has improved; the Home Help Service is available if required, for domiciliary confinements, and the ambulance service in general can ensure rapid admission to a maternity unit, should any unforeseen complication arise in a domiciliary confinement.

Taking the above factors into consideration, it would be reasonable to assume that there would be an increase in domiciliary confinements. The Survey shows that this expectation is incorrect and that there is an increasing trend for expectant mothers to have their confinements in a maternity unit, rather than at home, 75.2% in 1957 as compared with 69% in 1956. It is difficult on obstetrical grounds to justify this trend; in Yeovil for a considerable number of years Maternal Mortality has been low. In the 5 years before the maternity units were taken over by the Regional Hospital Board (July 1948) there were 2,188 confinements in the Borough, with 1 maternal death; from 1949 - 1953 there have been 2,819 births, with only 1 maternal death. From these figures it can be inferred that the standard of obstetrics is high and that it can be, and was, observed equally well in domiciliary confinements as in maternity unit confinements.

There are two criticisms that can be levelled at Institutional Midwifery (1) The increased risk of sepsis, especially that of Staphylococcal infection in the newly born infant, though in Yeovil the record is good. (2) The cost of Institutional as compared with Domiciliary Midwifery. The average cost per patient for confinement in a maternity unit in Yeovil is £34.13s.6d., the cost for a patient confined at home is £16.9s. per case attended by the Somerset County Council.

A sub-committee of the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1957 investigated the running costs of hospitals and it was stated that "sufficient use is not being made of domiciliary midwifery and home nursing services to keep down the load on hospitals". If the rate of admission to maternity units had been reduced to 50%, the cost of hospital and domiciliary midwifery service of the 579 patients under review in the Survey would have been reduced from approximately £17,500 to £14,839, a saving of £2,661.

#### CARE OF THE AGED

I referred in my previous report to this problem, which, owing to the increasing longevity of the population becomes more difficult each year. As the Committee already knows, there is a liaison between the Hospital and Public Health Services, by which a questionnaire is completed by the Health Visitors. This questionnaire is of some value in determining the priority for admission, but fails to give a complete picture. I am convinced that the optimum use of hospital beds will not be achieved until a Consultant Geriatrician is appointed to this area. If such an appointment were made, old people could be visited in their homes and an accurate assessment could then be made of the necessity for admission to hospital, based on an accurate knowledge of

the medical and social conditions. The questionnaire has contributed somewhat to the welfare of the aged, as the W.V.S. are informed of the names and addresses of old people, and from this information are able to supply, if required, hot meals through the "Meals on Wheels" service.

More recently the religious demonination of old people has been recorded and the appropriate Minister of Religion informed, so that home visiting can be arranged and thus reduce the loneliness of such people.

I have the pleasure in again recording my appreciation of the help and co-operation received from the Council, from the Public Health Committee and from the Members of the Staff.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

P. POWER FOX.

Medical Officer of Health.

### VITAL STATISTICS

	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>
Population .. .. .	23,950	24,050
Number of Births .. .. .	342	383
Birth Rate Per 1,000 .. .. .	14.2	15.9
Number of Deaths .. .. .	288	312
Death Rate per 1,000 .. .. .	12.02	11.8
Infantile Mortality .. .. .	23.3	13.05
Phthisis Death Rate .. .. .	0.08	-
Cancer Death Rate .. .. .	1.6	2.04

### YEOVIL BOROUGH

#### STATISTICS OF THE AREA FOR THE YEAR 1957

Area (in acres) .. .. .	2,256
Rateable Value (31st March, 1958)	£394,668
Estimated Produce of 1d. rate in year ending 31st March, 1958 ..	£1,564
Number of inhabited houses (31st March, 1958)	7,933
Population .. .. .	24,050

### PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The Borough of Yeovil comprises an area of 2,256 acres and is situated at the extreme South of the County of Somerset, on the borders of Dorset, in the midst of an agricultural area.

The town is located on the Upper and Middle Liassic Formation. The sub-soil is chiefly clay, lying upon marlstone with the Midford Sands at Hendford Hill.

The greatest elevations within the Borough are; on the North - Mudford Road, 372 feet; on the West - Bunford Lane, 233 feet, and on the South - West Coker Road, 309 feet. The lowest point is on the East, beyond the Sewage Works, 96.7 feet.

### WATER SUPPLY

The water supply is derived from the various sources, the majority being situated in Dorset. The sources of supply are as follows:- Spring Pond (two springs), Evershot Tunnel, upper and lower Haydon Wood, Stockwood and the Cattistock source, which consists of four boreholes. In addition, water is obtained from a borehole at Preston Plucknett, and as a temporary measure additional water is obtained from a borehole at Bunford Hollow. All the water is chlorinated and frequent bacteriological analyses show the water to be satisfactory in quality. Unfortunately, the quantity available does not meet the present demand, which is approximately 1,400,000 gallons per day. An arrangement has now been agreed to with the Yeovil Rural District Council to obtain an additional supply from the Sutton Bingham Reservoir, which should ensure adequate supplies for the foreseeable future.

### METEOROLOGY

The climate is mild and relaxing. There is little fog or mist.



### RAINFALL

Summerleaze Park School. Total Rainfall - 27.52 inches.

### POPULATION

The population for 1957 is 24,050.

### OCCUPATION

The main industry of Yeovil is in the manufacture of leather gloves, and includes all processes from the preparation of the raw hides to the production of the finished article. This trade gives factory and home employment to a large number of the persons of both sexes.

In addition to the gloving industry there is a thriving aircraft industry and other light engineering industries, employing nearly 3,000 persons. There is also a large factory for the manufacture of preserved food and dairy products.

The number of factories powered is 152, and the number of factories non-powered is 45.

### HOSPITAL SERVICES

The Hospital Services in the Borough are administered by the South Somerset Hospital Management Committee under the general direction of the South Western Regional Hospital Board. Situated in the Borough are

- (1) The Yeovil and District Hospital - an acute general hospital.
- (2) Summerlands Hospital - mainly used as a Geriatric hospital.
- (3) Yeovil Maternity Hospital (Crossways) - 14 beds.
- (4) Balidon Maternity Hospital - a General Practitioners Unit - 17 beds.

The Yeovil Hospital consists of 84 beds, of which six are private, the number of in-patients treated was 2,447 and the number of new out-patients 5,213. The number of X-ray examinations carried out was 18,874. In considering these figures, it must be borne in mind that the area which the hospital now serves has considerably increased. Despite the valuable services which the hospitals carry out, it cannot be stated that the present hospital buildings and equipment are adequate for the present and potential requirements of the Borough and surrounding district. The matter is under review by the responsible authorities.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment are treated at the South Petherton Hospital (50 beds). In general, the Cubicle Block (10 beds) is only required, and the other 40 beds are utilized for post-operative cases, so relieving the strain on the Yeovil Hospital and for General Practitioner patients and semi-chronic sick.

### TUBERCULOSIS

A Chest Clinic is held on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Yeovil Hospital. Patients requiring in-patient treatment are admitted to Sanatoria at Quantock and Taunton.

### CHRONIC SICK

Summerlands Hospital (97 beds), which is situated in the Borough, is the largest hospital in the area used for this purpose. This hospital was originally a Poor Law Institute built in 1837, and the layout, etc., does not conform with the accepted standards of today. Further, there is a constant shortage of nursing staff, but despite these handicaps, valuable work is carried out by the staff of the hospital.

## LABORATORY SERVICE

A small laboratory is located at the Yeovil Hospital. A Public Health Laboratory Service has a laboratory in Taunton, at which bacteriological examination of swab, blood, sputum and faeces is carried out. Bacteriological and chemical analysis for the examination of milk, foods, water supplies and sewage effluents are also carried out.

## AMBULANCE FACILITIES

The Ambulance Service is a responsibility of the Somerset County Council. The Ambulance Control Office is located at the Summerlands Hospital. The ambulances and the larger types of vehicles for sitting cases are in radio communication with the control office. A daily 24 hour service is maintained.

## HOUSING

I am indebted to the Housing Manager, Mr. A. H.M. Herington, for the resume showing the number of council houses erected by the Corporation

Houses completed in the years to 31st December:-

1946	..	..	..	150	Prefabs		
1947	..	..	..	61	houses		
1948	..	..	..	19	"		
1949	..	..	..	95	"		
1950	..	..	..	80	"		
1951	..	..	..	132	"	and flats	
1952	..	..	..	120	"	"	"
1953	..	..	..	138	"	"	"
1954	..	..	..	178	"	"	and bungalows
1955	..	..	..	102	"	"	"
1956	..	..	..	112	"	"	"
1957	..	..	..	56	"	"	"

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1,243

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Houses etc., erected pre-war	..	..	..	..	1,596
" " sold pre-war	..	..	..	..	177
Houses owned at 31.12.57.	..	..	..	..	1,419
Houses etc., erected post-war	..	..	..	..	1,243
" " sold post-war	..	..	..	..	64
					<hr/> 1,179

Houses etc., erected by Local Authority and still owned by them = 2,657

The number of applicants on the waiting list as at the 31st December, 1957, was 847 as compared with 812 in December, 1956.

## VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

The statistics furnished by the Registrar General show the number of births and deaths after correction has been made for transfers to the normal place of residence of the individuals concerned. From these figures can be calculated the "crude" birth and death rates. As, however, the highest mortality occurs at the two extremes of life, and industrial areas in general have a bigger proportion of people living in the middle age periods of life, some correction must be made for the irregularities of distribution as regards age and sex, as otherwise the death rate will afford no accurate means of comparing the healthiness of one district with another. This comparability factor is furnished by the Registrar General and applied to the crude birth or death rate, gives a standardised rate and enables comparison to be made with the rate for England and Wales, or with rates of other districts.

### BIRTHS

					<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
(a)	LIVE BIRTHS			<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	Legitimate	..	..	194	173	367
	Illegitimate	..	..	10	6	16
	Total	..	..	204	179	383

Crude Birth Rate per 1,000 estimate population .. 15.9

Standardised Birth Rate per 1,000 estimate population 16.2

### (b) STILL BIRTHS

					<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
				<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	Legitimate	..	..	3	3	6
	Illegitimate	..	..	1	-	1
	Total	..	..	4	3	7

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births 18.2 21.1

### DEATHS

					<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
				<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total Deaths	..	..	..	136	176	312
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population	..	..	..	..	..	12.9
Standardised Death Rate per 1,000 population	..	..	..	..	..	11.8

### MATERNAL MORTALITY

Puerperal Sepsis	..	..	..	..	..	-
Other Puerperal Causes	..	..	..	..	..	-



# INFANT MORTALITY

		<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age	..	5	8
Deaths among Legitimate Infants	..	5	8
" " Illegitimate Infants	..	-	-
Death Rate per 1,000 live births	..	13.05	23.3
" " per 1,000 legitimate births	..	13.6	23.8
" " per 1,000 illegitimate births	..	-	-

		<u>1957</u>	<u>1956</u>
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	.. ..	59	40
Deaths from Heart Diseases (all ages)	.. ..	103	107
Deaths from Phthisis (all ages)	.. ..	-	2

# BIRTHS

The total number of births was 383, 204 male and 179 female. Of these, 16 were illegitimate - 10 male and 6 female. The table shows the birth rate for the previous ten years.

# BIRTH RATES

1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
16.4	15.8	14.6	15.3	15.08	14.9	13.5	15.0	14.2	15.9

# DEATHS

There was an increase in the total number of deaths, 312 in 1957, as compared with 288 for the previous year. The Standardised Death Rate was 11.8 as compared with 12.02 for the previous year; the Death Rate for England and Wales was 11.5.

The following table shows the age and sex incidence, and it will be noted that amongst the males of the 136 deaths, 124 occurred amongst those 65 years and over, and 59 amongst those 75 years and over. Of the females, out of the total of 176 deaths, 162 were 65 years and over and 116 were 75 years and over.

Ages at Death in years						<u>1957</u>		
						<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 1	..	..	..	..	..	2	3	5
1	..	..	..	..	..	-	-	-
5	..	..	..	..	..	-	1	1
15	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	3
25	..	..	..	..	..	3	-	3
45	..	..	..	..	..	5	9	14
65	..	..	..	..	..	41	27	68
Total under 70	..	..	..	..	..	53	41	94
70	..	..	..	..	..	24	19	43
75	..	..	..	..	..	19	23	42
80	..	..	..	..	..	23	35	58
85	..	..	..	..	..	13	33	46
90	..	..	..	..	..	1	21	22
95	..	..	..	..	..	3	4	7
Over 100	..	..	..	..	..	-	-	-
Total over 70	..	..	..	..	..	83	135	218
Totals	..	..	..	..	..	136	176	312



The following table shows the causes of death during 1957.

1957

CAUSES OF DEATH	Males	Females
Other infective and parasitic diseases	1	-
Malignant neoplasm, stomach .. ..	2	6
" " lung, bronchus .. ..	8	1
" " breast .. ..	1	7
" " uterus .. ..	-	10
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	11	13
Leukaemia, aleukaemia .. ..	-	1
Diabetes .. ..	2	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system ..	21	41
Coronary disease, angina .. ..	20	13
Hypertension with heart disease ..	6	3
Other heart disease .. ..	20	41
Other circulatory disease .. ..	4	7
Influenza .. ..	6	3
Pneumonia .. ..	2	6
Bronchitis .. ..	6	1
Other diseases of respiratory system ..	3	-
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum .. ..	3	-
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ..	-	1
Nephritis and nephrosis .. ..	1	-
Hyperplasia of prostate .. ..	1	-
Congenital malformations .. ..	1	-
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	9	17
Motor vehicle accidents .. ..	3	1
All other accidents .. ..	1	-
Suicide .. ..	4	3
	136	176

#### DEATH RATE

1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
10.9	10.08	10.59	14.23	10.57	10.85	9.57	11.34	12.02	11.8

#### CANCER

The number of deaths due to cancer (all forms) was 59. The table as set out below shows the incidence of cancer for previous years.

1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
37	50	38	46	48	51	41	49	40	59

#### CANCER DEATH RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION

Year	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
Yeovil Borough	1.5	2.1	1.58	2.06	2.02	2.14	1.7	2.04	1.6	2.04
County of Somerset	1.9	1.9	1.89	2.00	1.98	1.84	2.06	2.045	1.89	2.054
England & Wales	1.8	1.8	1.94	1.96	1.99	1.99	2.035	2.056	2.1	2.1

INFANT MORTALITY

The number of children dying within the first twelve months of life was 5 as compared with 8 for the year 1956. The rate per thousand of live births was 13.05 as compared with England and Wales - 23.0.

The following table shows the number of deaths and the Infantile Mortality Rate as compared with previous years.

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
Number of Deaths ..	14	14	7	9	11	8	7	5	8	5
Rate per 1,000 live births in Yeovil ..	36.4	37.4	20	25	30	22.5	21.7	13.8	23.3	13.05
Rate per 1,000 live births in England & Wales	34	32	29.8	29.6	27.6	26.5	25.5	24.9	23.8	16.1

CAUSES OF DEATH

Congenital defects	...	...	1
Pneumonia	...	...	1
Atelectasis	...	...	1
Prematurity	...	...	1
Meningitis	...	...	1
			<hr/> 5 <hr/>

AGE OF DEATH

Under 24 hours	Under 1 week	1 month or under	Under 1 year
-	4	5	5

MATERNAL MORTALITY

There were no maternal deaths during the year.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the details of infectious diseases notified during the year and also the figures for the previous year.

DISEASE	Cases notified	
	1955	1956
Poliomyelitis ... ..	5	21
Scarlet Fever ... ..	2	3
Measles ... ..	236	7
Pneumonia ... ..	17	12
Erysipelas ... ..	5	2
Whooping Cough ... ..	71	21
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	9	18
Dysentery ... ..	2	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ... ..	-	1
Food Poisoning ... ..	-	5
Total ... ..	347	90

## DIPHTHERIA AND WHOOPING COUGH IMMUNIZATION

In general, all infants immunized against Diphtheria, are also immunized against Whooping Cough. Provision is made for the occasional infant who for certain medical reasons, immunization against Whooping Cough is not indicated, or because the parents do not wish the combined course of injections, for immunization against Diphtheria only to be carried out.

### Diphtheria

The number of infants under the age of 12 months immunized was 194, the number under the age of 5 years was 261, and the total number of children under the age of 14 years was 324. The number of births for the year 1956 was 342, so that the percentage of infants immunized was 56.7%. This figure should be higher, 75% is the target to be aimed for, but as 51 children between the ages of 1 and 2 years were also immunized, the discrepancy is not quite so marked as would appear at first sight, as the percentage of children immunized under the age of 2 years is 71.5%. In addition, 210 children of school age received reinforcement doses.

### Whooping Cough

Immunization against Whooping Cough was commenced in 1950, but not until 1952 was there an appreciable number of infants immunized against the disease. It has been recognized that where infants who had been immunized did contract the disease, that the Whooping Cough was less severe than in unimmunized infants. Figures for the past 5 years 1957 - 1953 show the average number of cases notified per annum to be 39.6 as opposed to the previous 5 years 1952 - 1948, when the average number of cases notified was 66.6.

## VACCINATION

The number of primary vaccinations carried out was 247, of which 214 were for infants under the age of 1 year. In addition, 14 revaccinations were carried out. It is pleasant to note that despite other Urban authorities in the County having larger populations, that as regards the number of primary vaccinations, Yeovil Borough figures are the highest.

The number of births for the year was 383, so that the number of infants vaccinated was approximately 53.2%.



TUBERCULOSIS

The number of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis notified during the year was 17, non-pulmonary 4. There were no deaths recorded as due to pulmonary tuberculosis, and none for non-pulmonary.

	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949
No. of cases notified Pulmonary ...	17	24	28	26	18	24	31	23	22
No. of cases notified Non-pulmonary	4	4	4	4	7	3	3	8	2
No. of deaths Pulmonary	-	2	2	5	4	9	12	8	5
No. of deaths non- pulmonary ...	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	2
Death Rate of Respir- atory Tuberculosis per 1,000 population	-	0.08	0.08	0.20	0.17	0.38	0.51	0.33	0.21

The Death Rate of all forms of Tuberculosis for England and Wales was 0.11 as compared with Yeovil - nil.

Age.			New Cases				Deaths			
			Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
			M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	..	..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	..	..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	..	..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	..	..	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
15	..	..	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	..	..	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
25	..	..	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
35	..	..	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
45	..	..	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	..	..	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
65 and upwards			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total			10	7	-	4	-	-	-	-

MASS RADIOGRAPHY

During the year, the Mass Radiography Unit paid three visits to Yeovil and the surrounding area.

Examinations were carried out at Unity Hall, Westland Aircraft Company, Ltd., Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Martock, South Petherton and Haselbury Plucknett. It was hoped that by making an intensive effort, people who had not been examined previously would avail themselves, and in the case of the Yeovil Borough, a letter, giving details of the time and place where the Unit was operating, was delivered to each house. A similar letter was sent by post to each house in Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Martock, South Petherton and Haselbury.



A total of 7,520 examinations were carried out, and on the face of it, the results would appear to be satisfactory, as there were only 3 cases of active Tuberculosis discovered, 4 inactive cases and 32 other chest abnormalities. However, if one takes into consideration the number of new cases of Tuberculosis notified during the year, it would be found in the case of men, that of the total number of 10 notified, 8 cases were in people 35 years of age and upwards, and that in the case of women, out of the 7 cases notified, 4 were 35 years of age and upwards.

The inference is, I think, that the Mass Radiography Unit is examining only those people who appreciate the value of such examination, and who, in the main, have been examined before. The Unit is failing to examine the older generation, and these are the people with the so-called "smoker's cough", who are the reservoirs of infection, but because they did not attend for examination, are undetected. Unless such people can be persuaded legally or otherwise to attend for examination, the value of the Mass Radiography Service is considerably diminished.

No. of Examinations Carried Out.			No. of Cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis Diagnosed	
			Active	Inactive
1948	4,260	...	9	32
1949	2,298	...	13	31
1950	2,316	...	4	41
1951	3,015	...	8	34
1952	4,191	...	9	37
1953	4,460	...	12	22
1954	4,561	...	6	32
1955	4,109	...	1	24
1956	3,490	...	2	75
*1957	7,520	...	3	4

\*This figure includes examinations carried out in the Yeovil Rural District.

DENTAL TREATMENT

Number of Ante-natal cases	..	49
Number of Post-natal cases	..	36
Number of children under 5 years		309

HOME VISITS BY HEALTH VISITORS

Infants:-

Primary visits	..	..	..	370
Subsequent visits	..	..	..	3,752
Visits to children 1 to 5 years				5,589

BLOOD EXAMINATION CLINIC

This clinic was commenced in 1947 and was, I think, the first local authority clinic in Somerset. It is held at the Preston Road Clinic, Yeovil. Since its inception, 4,298 individual pregnant women have been examined, 718 examinations being carried out in 1957. The area from which the patients are drawn, are, as would be expected, mainly the Yeovil Borough and Yeovil Rural District. Patients are referred by the private practitioner or midwife, without previous appointment. A card showing the patient's blood group, and whether she is Rh. Positive or Rh. Negative, is forwarded to her direct, together with a covering letter emphasizing the importance of her

retaining the card in case she ever requires a blood transfusion for any purpose. A report giving further information, including percentage of haemoglobin and W.R. test, is forwarded to the private doctor, and a copy of this report is also forwarded to the midwife or Matron of the maternity home, depending on where the patient is having her confinement. Previously, similar information was forwarded to Yeovil Hospital in case the patient was admitted there for any reason and required a blood transfusion, but a copy is now forwarded direct by the Laboratory doing the tests.

A record of all blood tests is also kept at the Public Health Department. In the case of second or subsequent pregnancies of Rh. Negative women, as the test is normally carried out early in pregnancy, a further test is carried out 6 to 8 weeks before the expected date of confinement, to exclude antibodies. If antibodies are found to be present, and if in sufficient quantities to threaten the welfare of the baby when born, arrangements are made for the baby to be born either at Bristol or Taunton, so that the blood transfusion of the baby can be carried out if necessary. The number of babies whose life has been saved by this procedure now runs into double figures and is a source of considerable gratification.

#### HAEMOGLOBIN ESTIMATION

An analysis of the haemoglobin percentage of all blood tests carried out in 1957 and from January to March, 1958, has been made. The analysis was sub-divided into (a) Mothers pregnant for the first time (b) Mothers pregnant for the second time (c) Mothers pregnant for third or more pregnancies.

The analysis showed that for group (a) the average haemoglobin level was 72.53% (342 patients examined), for group (b) 73.38% (214 patients examined) and for group (c) 70.4% (217 patients examined).

In general, the blood was examined at about the end of the third month of pregnancy and I consider that these levels are too low, and could prejudice the safety of the mother and baby at the confinement, apart from the fact that the expectant mother may have indefinite signs of ill-health during the pregnancy.

In a comparatively small number of patients, the haemoglobin level was retested at the 32/34th week of pregnancy, and it is interesting to note, that in general, where the patient had shown a low level at the first test, that this level had increased, presumably due to iron treatment prescribed by the family doctor and in the case of patients who showed a high level at the first test, frequently this level had fallen considerably when the second blood was taken. I am of the opinion that unless a blood test for haemoglobin is done for each expectant mother at the 32/34th week, so as to exclude anaemia, all expectant mothers should receive a course of iron in the last 6 to 8 weeks of pregnancy. It may be possible to arrange for a second blood examination of all expectant mothers at the 32/34th week of pregnancy, but such an arrangement can be carried out only with the co-operation of the family doctor and the Hospital Service.

#### MATERNITY SURVEY

As in the previous year, a survey was again carried out, based on women whose babies were born during the year 1957. In order to obtain sufficient large figures, the survey includes confinements both in the Yeovil Borough and in the Yeovil Rural District. Analysis of these figures gave the following results.



### Domiciliary Confinements

144 women had their confinements at home, i.e., 24.8% of the total number of confinements under review. A medical practitioner was present in 36.8% of confinements and Analgesia was given in 67.3% of confinements. 7.6% of the women who had their confinements at home attended for ante-natal exercises.

### Confinements in Maternity Units

435 women had their confinements in a maternity unit, i.e., 75.2% of the number under review. This percentage is higher than the previous year (69%), and shows the increasing trend in institutional midwifery. It is doubtful whether this trend is a desirable one, since apart from other factors, there is an increased risk of infection, especially that due to Staphylococcal organisms. Of the 435 patients admitted to maternity units, 171 were admitted on obstetrical grounds, 199 on social grounds, 14 as emergencies and 51 patients availed themselves of the amenity beds. A medical practitioner was present in 46.1% of confinements in maternity units.

### Blood Tests

The number of women who had had a blood test either for the pregnancy under review, or for a previous pregnancy, was 573, i.e. 99%. This figure I regard as highly satisfactory.

### Analgesia

I stated before that 67.3% of women who had a domiciliary confinement received some form of Analgesia. In the case of patients confined in maternity units, the figure was 81.9%.

### Dental Treatment

The percentage of expectant mothers who had had dental treatment was 54.4%. This figure shows a slight improvement on the previous year, but it is recognised that all women should be dentally examined during pregnancy, and if necessary receive the appropriate treatment, since because of the demand of the foetus on the mother, there is an increased risk of dental caries.

### Breast Feeding

The number of women who breast fed their babies in the first 14 days was 572, i.e. 98.7%. This percentage had fallen to 73.2% at the time this survey was carried out (14th day approximately). An additional survey carried out in Yeovil Borough only showed that when the babies were three months old the percentage of babies breast fed had fallen to 36%.

### Ante-natal Talks

As in previous years, invitations are forwarded to expectant mothers having their first or second babies, to attend for a series of Ante-natal Talks. The number of women attending during 1957 was 87. In general, it is difficult for patients living in the Yeovil Rural District to attend.

## INFANT WELFARE

### Preston Road Clinic

Total number of children attending	...	...	...	387
Total number of children attending for the first time				204
Total number of attendances made	...	...	...	2,630

### Larkhill Road Clinic

Total number of children attending	...	...	...	110
Total number of children attending for the first time				40
Total number of attendances made	...	...	...	481

### Southville Clinic

Total number of children attending	...	...	...	190
Total number of children attending for the first time				73
Total number of attendances made	...	...	...	1,026

## HOME HELP SERVICE

This service continues to render excellent assistance and the following table indicates the scope of its activities.

### No. of Cases who received help in 1957

<u>Type of Case</u>	<u>Yeovil Borough</u>
Maternity .. .. .	26
Old Age and Infirmary .. .. .	131
Tuberculosis .. .. .	5
Chronic Illness .. .. .	17
Emergency Illness .. .. .	41
Families of motherless children .. .. .	1
Total .. .. .	221

A number of the old age and chronic sick cases have received help for two or three years.

## NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT.

No action was taken under Section 47 of the above Act.

## REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE.

The school health service provides for remedial and preventive treatment, and consists of:-

- (a) Routine and special medical inspections.
- (b) Minor Ailments treatment.
- (c) Cleanliness inspections of children by Health Visitors.
- (d) Dental inspection and treatment.
- (e) A much expanded scheme, in co-operation with the Hospital Services, for the treatment of defects of vision, and of ear, nose and throat.

also

In addition, the following services are provided:-

- (f) Routine Mass Radiography of all children of school leaving age. Special examination of children, irrespective of age, who have been thought to have been exposed to a particular



risk of tuberculous infection, have been carried out, with the co-operation of the Mass Radiography Service.

- (g) Routine Colour Vision testing of children.
- (h) Routine and special testing of children's hearing acuity, using the Gramophone Audiometer.
- (i) Speech Therapy.
- (j) Ultra Violet Light clinics for debilitated children.
- (k) Routine immunization of children against diphtheria. This consists mainly of reinforcement inoculations of children already immunized, but children who have been "missed" in infancy are immunized.
- (l) Breathing Exercises Clinic.

In addition to the above, arrangements exist for a special session at the Yeovil Borough Swimming Baths for the rehabilitation of certain types of handicapped children. A large proportion of these pupils are those who have had Anterior Poliomyelitis with a residual physical defect. The value of this scheme is now well established and much credit is due to the work carried out by the local detachment of the British Red Cross.

The Breathing Exercises Clinic was established in 1950, and is intended mainly for children who have Asthma, but also for other children with a history of chest trouble and for whom breathing exercises are valuable. The number of children initially enrolled was 37; the number on the roll in December, 1957, was 37. The total number of attendances in the year was 498 and since the inception of the scheme 106 children have been or are being treated. There is a marked improvement physically of children attending regularly, as shown by the increase in chest expansion and also by clinical examination of the chest. In addition, the children develop a sense of self confidence as they learn how to combat an impending attack of Asthma, and there is a marked improvement of physique and general posture.

The importance of Asthma as a disease is frequently overlooked; about 3,000 deaths a year are ascribed to Asthma, in England and Wales. In terms of capacity, it is stated that Asthma accounts for 206 days out of every 10,000 of incapacity for all causes. By comparison, the figure for tuberculosis is 108, and for gastric and duodenal ulcer together, 224. It will be appreciated, therefore, that any measure to help the asthmatic child is of importance, and it is recognised that the treatment of asthma in childhood is to a considerable extent truly preventive medicine. The main credit for the success of the Clinic is due to the Health Visitors.

In the final paragraph of his Report for the years 1952 and 1953, Sir John Charles, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H., Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Education, states: "Change is a characteristic of all living things and if there is vitality in the school health service, it will adapt itself to changing circumstances." It is hoped that the foregoing remarks regarding the school health service in the South-East Somerset (Yeovil) Divisional Area are evidence that the service is endeavouring to cope with the present day problems.

R E P O R T  
OF THE  
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR  
FOR THE YEAR 1957.

TO:

The Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee:-

I present herewith my Report for the year 1957, in which housing again received much attention, with the result that some of the worn out housing accommodation has at last been cleared away. A summary of the work in connection with unfit premises during this year is given below:-

- |     |  |    |
|-----|--|----|
| (1) | Total number of unfit houses dealt with .....                              | 46 |
| (2) | Number included in 4 Clearance Areas.....                                  | 17 |
| (3) | Houses included in "grey land" in connection with<br>Clearance Areas ..... | 6  |
| (4) | Total number of unfit houses demolished during year                        | 38 |

During the three years ended December, 1957, a total of 114 houses were dealt with as unfit under the Housing Acts.

A. CLEARANCE AREAS:

<u>Houses demolished:</u>	<u>Unfit houses.</u>
i. in pink areas .....	25
ii. in pink hatched yellow areas .....	-
iii. in grey areas .....	6

<u>B.</u>	i. demolished formally or informally .....	12
	ii. closure procedure .....	14
	iii. closure procedure and undertakings given .....	3
	iv. closure procedure - houses on list of ancient blgs.	nil.
	v. closure of part building .....	2

NUISANCES:

COMPLAINTS:

Included below is a list of the various complaints received by the Department during the year:-

General housing defects .....	46
Defective drainage, cesspools, etc....	22
Smoke, dust and effluvia .....	29
Rats and mice .....	86
Verminous premises .....	5
Kitchen waste bins .....	6
Foodstuffs and food premises .....	10
Keeping of animals and poultry .....	1
Dumping of refuse .....	2
Nuisances from water courses .....	2
Factories and other premises .....	2
Overcrowding .....	1
Miscellaneous .....	15

## HOUSING INSPECTIONS:

Houses and other premises inspected:-

(a) under the Public Health Act .....	66
(b) under the Housing Acts .....	103

## Reinspections:

(a) under the Public Health Acts .....	124
(b) under the Housing Acts .....	100

Defective houses rendered fit:-

(1) Informally under (a) .....	13
Informally under (b) .....	1
(2) Formally under (a) by owners .....	5
(3) Formally under (b) (Sec: 9, 10, 11 or 16) by owners .....	1

## OVERCROWDING:

No further cases of overcrowding were recorded during the year. There are approximately 9 borderline cases. The position is subject to change from time to time.

## RENT ACT 1957.

Applications for Certificates of Disrepair .....	20
Undertakings submitted and accepted .....	7
Certificates of Disrepair granted .....	1
Incorrect applications submitted .....	1
Applications not proceeded with .....	2
Number still in hand .....	9

## OTHER INSPECTIONS:

Complaints .....	65
Drainage .....	227
Verminous premises .....	5
Offensive trades .....	9
Movable dwellings .....	2
Complaints re Rodents:-	
(a) by the Public Health Department .....	34
(b) by the Rodent Operator .....	743
Smoke nuisances .....	13
Dust nuisances .....	2
Interviewing owners, builders, etc .....	309
Inspections re Certificates of Disrepair .....	25
Annual Inspections of Cinemas .....	3

## RESULTS OF INSPECTIONS AND VISITS.

### General Defects:

Roofs renewed .....	3
Roofs repaired .....	10
Chimneys rebuilt .....	5
Chimneys repaired .....	8
Walls repaired .....	11
Walls rendered .....	13
Walls decorated .....	23
Windows renewed .....	4
Windows repaired .....	20
Windows painted .....	26
Doors repaired .....	24
Eaves guttering repaired .....	4
Doors painted .....	12
Ceilings renewed .....	3
Ceilings repaired .....	7



Ceilings whitened .....	9
Skirting boards repaired .....	3
Floors renewed .....	3
Floors repaired ..	10
Scullery provided .....	1
Sculleries rebuilt .....	2
Food cupboards provided .....	2
Staircases repaired .....	2
Ventilation improved .....	2
Dampness remedied .....	3
Overcrowding abated .....	1
Yards paved .....	2
Yards repaired .....	4
Bedding destroyed .....	15
Lighting improved .....	1

#### Drainage:

Drainage relaid .....	12
Drainage repaired .....	2
Cesspool Systems converted .....	2
Choked drains cleared .....	4
W.C.'s built .....	6
W.C.'s repaired .....	8
Sinks provided .....	3
Gulleys provided .....	15
New W.C. Pans provided .....	3
Baths fixed .....	1
Urinals fixed .....	1
Inspection chambers built .....	14
Interceptors fixed .....	2
C.I. Covers provided .....	11
Soil and vent pipes provided .....	1
Basins fixed .....	1

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following disinfections were carried out:-

Houses disinfected .....	12
Rooms sprayed or fumigated .....	72
for tuberculosis .....	18
for cancer .....	12
for vermin (disinfestation) ...	10
Library books .....	60
Gloving fumigated .....	7
Clothes .....	10
Miscellaneous .....	19

### INSPECTIONS OF FOOD PREMISES

Slaughterhouses .....	1401
Butcher's Shops .....	47
Cafes, restaurants, etc. ....	44
Bakehouses .....	14
Dairies .....	11
Icecream premises .....	44
Re: Application for registration .....	3
Fish Shops .....	16
Provision dealers .....	151
Cooked Meat Shops .....	3
Other premises .....	114
Complaints re unsound food .....	18
Prosecution re unsound food .....	1



FOOD INSPECTION

SLAUGHTERHOUSES:

The premises in Queen Street, still continue to serve for the Borough and parts of the rural area. A fair amount of killing is for markets outside the area. In order to maintain 100% inspection, a considerable amount is done after hours, especially Sundays.

YEAR	Cattle	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Calves	TOTAL
1953	2272	7388	11456	81	21,197
1954	2149	7480	12276	788	22,693
1955	2270	3598	13761	1318	20,947
1956	2176	2896	12283	2715	20,070
1957	2047	3951	9038	1774	16,810

The following statement contains particulars of the number of animals killed and inspected during the year, together with the amount of meat condemned.

The figures below record the total number of carcasses examined together with the percentage affected by disease of one kind or another.

	Cattle excl'd. cows.	Cows	Calves	Sheep and lambs	Pigs
Number killed ..	2009	38	1774	3951	9038
Number inspected ..	2009	38	1774	3951	9038
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis:</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	4	-	6	4	17
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	327	8	11	76	301
% of number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	16.4	21.5	.95	2.02	3.5
<u>Tuberculosis only.</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned ..	-	-	-	-	3
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ..	113	4	-	-	155
% of number inspected affected with T.B.	5.6	10.5	-	-	1.7

It is worth noting that the percentage of carcasses of T.B. susceptible animals, (i.e. excluding sheep) condemned represents only .023 $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total killed.

MEAT OTHER THAN WHOLE CARCASSES CONDEMNED:

Beef	-	5 cwts. 3 qrs.	} T.B., Bruising abscesses and Bone Taint.
Pork	-	2 cwts. 2 qrs. 2 lbs.	
Veal	-	1 qr. 24 lbs.	

OFFAL CONDEMNED:

	<u>Bullocks</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Pigs</u>
Heads and Tongues	47	2	11	103
Plucks	-	-	4	84
Lungs and Hearts	61	3	3	84
Lungs	86	8	65	322
Skirts	17	-	-	-
Kidneys	2	-	-	34
Livers	174	28	92	122
Part Livers	234	-	-	-
Stomachs	20	-	-	1
Milts	13	-	-	2
Guts	24	-	-	9
Mesenteries	2	-	-	1

Note: The large number of whole or part livers condemned is due chiefly to parasitic infestation.

CANNED FOODS CONDEMNED.

Jam .....	27 tins
Meat .....	478 "
Milk .....	276 "
Fruit and Vegetables .....	746 "
Fish .....	188 "
Hams .....	44 "
Soup .....	68 "

TOTAL ..	<u>1,827 tins.</u>
----------	--------------------

Other Food Condemned:-

Ham .....	57 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Wet Fish ....	3 stone.

FOOD AND DRUGS - MILK AND DAIRIES REGULATIONS 1949

- |     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| (a) | Number of registered distributors .....   | 10 |
| (b) | Number of registered Dairy Premises (other than dairy farms) ...                              | 13 |
| (c) | Number of Licensed dealers of designated milk .....   | 8  |
| (d) | Number of supplementary licenses issued to distributors whose dairy is outside the area ..... | 3  |

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT 1938.

APPLICATIONS GRANTED FOR REGISTRATION OF PERSONS  
AND PREMISES.

For the sale and storage of Icecream .....	3
For the preparation of Preserved Food .....	nil.

ICECREAM.

Total number of premises registered at the end of the year:-

- (a) Manufacture, sale and storage ..... nil.
- (b) Sale and storage only ..... 82

SAMPLES TAKEN

DESIGNATED MILKS: (for keeping quality only).

	<u>By Public Health Inspectors' Dept.</u>	<u>By Somerset County Council.</u>
Number taken	36	115
Number passed	35	114

<u>ICECREAM:</u>	<u>Placed in provisional grades</u>			
Number taken	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
83	70	11	2	-
A good grade was maintained throughout the year.				

SWIMMING BATHS WATER:

Samples are not sent off, but readings for residual chlorine are taken regularly, and have been satisfactory.

WATER:

	<u>Bacteriological</u>		<u>Chemical</u>	
	<u>Number taken.</u>	<u>Satisfactory.</u>	<u>Number taken.</u>	<u>Satisfactory.</u>
Main supplies (to cover all sources).	38	38	-	-
Source supplies (supplying mains).	8	8	8	8

Note:- Tests are now made for residual chloride in each sample taken. All water supplies are chlorinated before passing into the mains.



VERMIN INFESTATION  
PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

1. Sewerage System:

During the year the sewerage system in the Borough was again systematically tested for rats. The following figures show the work carried out. The infestations found have proved to be of a minor character.

Areas test baited .....	10
Points baited .....	211
Negative results (presumed clear) .....	174
Total number of visits made .....	527

2. Private premises (including business premises):

Number of premises visited .....	583
Number treated for some degree of infestation	107
Number with no infestation .....	376
Number of points baited .....	2895
Number of premises cleared .....	107

3. Corporation Premises:

Inspection and treatment are carried out at the Corporation Sewage Works and refuse tip regularly. The work is done as a routine measure in order to keep any infestation under control.

During the year approximately 140 visits were made and more than 1,200 points baited.

120 visits were made in connection with 5 contracts at business and factory premises.

STATUTORY ACTION UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.

Act and Section	Statutory notice served.	Court Action.	Abated.	In hand.
Public Health Act:- Section 93	3	-	3	-
Section 24	1	-	1	-

I again record my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their continued support throughout the year, also the Members of the staff in my Department.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

C. G. H. RICE.



